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ABSTRACT

Ninety-two graduate students in counseling and psychology were asked to respond to tasks measuring creative expression and certain value constructs. Significant, although minimal, correlations occurred between some factors of creativity and values. The value scale produced two opposing value factors for this sample of counselors. Results suggest that the development of divergent thinking processes may be an educational process useful in the development of more effective counselors. (Author/CKJ)

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Creative Expression and Humanistic Values of Counselors

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Creative expression and humanistic values of counselors

Studies of the creative individual indicate that the creative person tends to be less rigid, less intolerant of ambiguity, and more flexible and sensitive to the problems of other people (Mackinnon, 1960; Torrance, 1962; Taylor, 1964). These positive aspects of the creative personality are considered by many authors to be important if not essential attributes of the effective counselor (Hobbs, 1958; McGowan and Schmidt, 1962; Rogers, 1962; Fullmer & Bernard, 1964; Gust, 1964; Cicirelli and Cicirelli, 1970; Richmond, 1970; Jackson & Thompson, 1971; and Dua, 1972). Barron (1963) stresses the sensitive perceptiveness of the creative person that enables him to understand anxieties in others. Eiduson (1962) also points out that the creative person develops in sensitivity to the more complex aspects of interpersonal relationships.

There is considerable agreement that a relationship exists among attitudes, dimensions of creativity and counselor effectiveness (Brams, 1961; Gruberg, 1967; McDaniel, 1967 and Whiteley et al. 1967). It seems apparent that a fuller understanding of these relationships can aid in counselor selection and training. In order to examine any possible relationships more carefully, it can be helpful to specify more precisely interrelationships among factors of creativity and attitudes held by counselors. The particular attitudes of concern in this study are the expressed values of the counselors.

Many studies of values are reported in the literature. Mogar (1964) has reviewed studies focusing on values expressed by college students. Richards, 1966; Scriven, 1966; Cole & Miller, 1967; Weisskopf-Joelson et al., 1969; Katkin & Weisskopf-Joelson, 1971; and Weisskopf-Joelson & Heiney, 1972; report additional studies on the values expressed by college students.

The work of Weisskopf-Joelson and associates is particularly relevant. They report the development of an instrument used to assess the currently expressed values of college students. This instrument attempts to inspect values that college students consider pertinent today. The instrument produces nine subscales that Weisskopf-Joelson et al., (1969), describe as follows:

> Self-interpretation gives cognitive structure to the individual's perception of himself. It helps him "understand" his experiences.
> Self-actualization motivates the individual to develop neglected potentialities.
> Humanistic Support helps the individual to see the problems of other people as similar to his own problems, to understand his difficulties as an aspect of the human condition.
> Relationship motivates the individual to relate himself emotionally to other people.
> Positive Evaluation of Suffering motivates the individual to perceive suffering as valuable and constructive.
> Dedication motivates the individual to devote himself to a cause in such a way that personal success becomes relatively unimportant as compared to the cause itself.
> Support makes the individual feel protected, guided, taken care of by a being who is stronger than he is.
> Achievement motivates the individual to work toward a goal, a major motivation being the desire for personal success (compare with Dedication).
> Conformity motivates the individual to act, feel, think as others do. (p. 300)

Although all of the preceding values are defined as expressing the strivings of man, each individual may differ in the relative stress he places on each value. Obviously, some persons place a higher value on

Conformity or Humanistic Support than do others.

Some of the values identified by the Weisskopf-Joelson, et al., scale seem more positively associated with a creative personality. For example, the values labeled Self-interpretation, Self-actualization, Humanistic Support, Dedication, and Achievement appear to be more closely related to a creative personality and to counselor effectiveness than are the other values. These selected values seem to connote more personal independence and less need to rely on others in a dependent way than do the other values: Relationship, Positive Evaluation of Suffering, Support, and Conformity. The first group of values imply a committment to change of self and to goals outside of one's self. As Frankl (1963) explains:

"You can only actualize and realize yourself to the extent to which you are fulfilling the meaning of your life. Then you are actualizing yourself in terms of a by-product, of a side effect; but if you are concerned with actualizing yourself, you are missing this target. . . there's a wise word which has been published by the great German philosopher, Karl Jaspers: "What man is, he ultimately becomes through the cause to which he has committed himself." I would say identity is not found by aiming at it, but by reaching out for something other than one's self, by committing one's self to something rather than being concerned with one's self." (p.3)

Frankl appears not to be negating the values of self-interpretation and self-actualization but suggests that these objectives may be achieved more readily as a by-product of fulfilling the purpose of life. His statements as well as those expressed by Richmond, et al., (1972) imply a significant relationship between self-development and one's perception of others.

Katkin & Weisskopf-Joelson (1971) note the relationship between values and the emotional adjustment of college students. One of their reported findings is that the well-adjusted group reports higher scores in Self-interpretation and Achievement and the maladjusted group higher scores on Relationship. Their study also suggests different values reported by college students bear a relationship to the student's level of emotional adjustment.

The present study will attempt to clarify relationships between values and factors of creativity expressed by counselors. It is anticipated that the nine subscales of the Weisskopf-Joelson scale of values fall into two categories of values which are significantly distinct. It is further hypothesized that the category of values implying committment to self and others (Self-interpretation; Self-actualization; Humanistic Support; Dedication; and Achievement) is more positively related to creativity than is the category consisting of the remaining values. These remaining values seem to imply greater dependency and less openness to others and to divergent experiences.

Method

The 92 subjects for this study were college students enrolled in graduate study in counseling and psychology. There were 44 males and 48 females from graduate training programs in midwestern and southeastern U.S. universities. The ages of subjects varied from 24 to 39 and all had some experience as a counselor. No attempt was made to control for length of experience, only to insure that all S's had both a theoretical and experiential basis in counseling. All S's had continuing career plans to work in the related fields of counseling or school psychology.

S's values were measured by the instrument developed by Weisskopf-Joelson, et al., (1969). Each of the nine values is paired with every other value under consideration. The instrument obtains a comparative index of the respondent's rating of each value. Creative expression is measured by Figural Form A, Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) (1966). This instrument measures the individual's ability to think creatively and to express creative thought in figural mode. Creative output can be scored as production in factors of Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, and Elaboration.

Results and Discussion

These resulting data were analyzed by obtaining Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients to determine existing relationships among the four factors of creativity and the two derived categories of values. This analysis provides for comparisons between expressed values and creative output of this group of counselors. The interrelationships among creative expression and values appears in Table 1.

(Insert Table 1 about here)

These results indicate clearly a positive relationship among the creativity factors Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, and Elaboration for this group of counselors. In brief, these factors of creativity may be understood as follows:

Fluency - quantity of creative response

Flexibility - variety in creative response

Originality - uniqueness of creative response

Elaboration - elaborate quality, connoting the individual's tendency to add detail to creative responses.

As can be seen from inspection of the data, the Fluency, Flexibility, and Originality of these counselors are generally more highly related to each other than to Elaboration responses. Only the Flexibility factor of creativity is significantly related to either category of values. As could be expected, the more flexible counselor places greater emphasis on a commitment to goals outside of self and less emphasis on dependent relationships with others. The flexible counselor may be viewed as more involved in reaching out for something other than self, in committing himself to unselfish goals than the less flexible counselor. In this process of reaching out, it appears that the flexible counselor may also strive for increased understanding of self and move toward self-actualization. Conversely, the less flexible counselor is likely to seek meaning in life through dependency on others.

The negative correlation between the two categories of values derived from the Weisskopf-Joelson, et al. scale was hypothesized. However, the strength of this correlation coefficient is somewhat surprising and suggests these two broader categories may increase the utility of this instrument in discriminant analysis of counselor characteristics. It appears that the nine subscales do fall rather neatly into two generally different value groups. The interrelationship of creative production and values expressed by these subjects is minimal but nevertheless significant. It is generally understood that an effective counselor is interested in helping others and it appears that the more flexible person has a greater interest in others. Therefore, the development of greater flexibility, of divergent thinking processes may be an educational process useful in the development of more effective counselors.

Both male and female subjects fo. this study were selected from different geographical areas in order to extend the generalizability of results. It is recognized that additional investigation needs to be undertaken to generalize the findings to counselors elsewhere.

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TABLE 1

Correlations Among Values and Creative Functioning of Counselors

	Fluency	Flexibility	Originality	Elaboration	Self & Others	Dependent
Fluency		.84**	.61**	.23*	.11	-.12
Flexibility			.65**	.22*	.22*	-.23*
Originality				.32**	.16	-.18
Elaboration					.05	-.02
Self & Others						-.97**
Dependent						

** P < .01

* P < .05